

## **Playa Vista Freshwater Marsh Inauguration**

Good morning & thank you for being here today. I am pleased to participate in today's event dedicating the Playa Vista Fresh Water Marsh and to have the opportunity to talk with you about urban storm water.

Storm water - the water that rushes down our streets and gutters and into our storm channels carrying bacterial and chemical pollutants to the ocean is a leading cause of water quality impairment in the Los Angeles Region, thus creating a risk for public health. Storm water and urban runoff (during both dry and wet weather) carry the pesticides, fertilizers, animal droppings, trash, food wastes, automotive byproducts, and other toxic substances generated by our urban lifestyles. These untreated pollutants hitch rides on water that flows through the storm drain networks directly to the coastal waters, rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries and wetlands.

It is thus imperative for our public health that new and redevelopment projects in our urban environment, currently of more than nine million people, rigorously integrate storm water quality and quantity considerations together with environmental aesthetics, architecture and open space design.

The freshwater marsh we are celebrating today is one example of how we, working in cooperation with that historic couple, Mother Nature and Father Time, can create and maintain a healthy environment for future generations.

When we look at the Freshwater Marsh what we see is beauty. What we don't see about this marsh, and about all projects that are built to restore the natural rain cycle which has been interrupted by urban development, is that they are ideally suited for flood control and stormwater management.

This marsh will protect the surrounding streets and the businesses and homes of the area from flooding. This marsh will also naturally treat stormwater runoff from the 572 acres of upstream portions of Playa Vista and the 538 acres of offsite areas within the watershed, including Jefferson and Lincoln Boulevards.

Filtering water is a natural function of wetlands. Plant materials slow down flowing water and sediments which allows many types of attached pollutants to drop out of the water column. Also, plants uptake some pollutants such as nutrients. Another example of the beneficence of Mother Nature and Father Time in helping us to clean up the problems we have created for ourselves and helping us to restore the nature water cycles of the earth.

Water quality, water quantity, public health, economic, recreational, social benefits can be realized through design that better integrates the natural landscape with storm water quality and drainage needs.

We have the opportunity to reduce risks to public health, improve the quality of our streams and ocean waters, greatly increase groundwater recharge, improve air quality, contribute to the local economy by making the beaches safer and cleaner and therefore more desirable for tourists and regional users, and enhance the already physically beautiful landscape of Southern California. The Freshwater Marsh is one such example of how to do so.

In closing, I would like to thank Ruth Lansford and Michael Josslin, and the Playa Vista Environmental Team, including Jacob Lipa, Sharon Lockheart and Eric Strucker for their expertise. Xavier Swamikannu, our Regional Board stormwater expert. &, of course, and as always, Mother Nature & Father Time. And a special thank you to all of you for taking your time to be here today.